

Weekly National Intelligencer.

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THE WEEKLY NATIONAL INTELLIGENCER

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NATIONAL INTELLIGENCER.

NOTES ON NEW BOOKS.

"Grammatica Inglesa reducida a veinte y dos lecciones, por D. Jose Urculla. Edición primera Americana, de la Septima de Paris. Aumentada y revisada por FAYETTE ROBINSON. Filadelfia: Thomas, Cowperthwait & Co. 1848." (That is, "English Grammar reduced to twenty-two lessons, by Don Joseph Urculla. First American Edition, revised by FAYETTE ROBINSON. Philadelphia: Thomas, Cowperthwait & Co. 1848.") 12mo. pp. 262.

This, it will be at once perceived, is a grammar for the learning of English by Spaniards; and we need hardly, therefore, remark that it is one of the first, and, as literary only, slightest inconveniences of our newly-acquired dominion over wide regions that speak a different tongue. We shall have to send the "schoolmaster abroad," our language before our laws, and pluck up a dialect before we can plant our institutions. Now will come that old and hateful process for the conquered of securing the civil offices of life, the forms of business and of law, forced out of their native speech, and themselves rendered foreigners upon their own soil. Their ignorance of our legislation will be deepened and prolonged by their ignorance of its vehicle; and both made more obstinate by the patriotic fidelity with which every subjugated race clings to its original idiom.

We are, in short, to encounter such untamable national aversion as has for five hundred years kept alive the Irish language and their feelings as a nation, in spite of all English sway and colonization and confiscation: we have perhaps to see the vanquished, after centuries, re-assert, like the Magyars, their traditions and their tongue; or, like the Greeks, cherish every vestige of heroism and letters for a time forgotten, until the national spirit shall awake once more and fling off our fetters. Such things have been many times again, and for us as much as for English or Austrians or Turks, when we come like them to enslave nations. And such things will be particularly apt to happen, unless we take wisdom enough to govern a good deal better abroad than we have, for some twenty years, been doing at home. Just now, however, our subject should be the government of words, not of men: so let us return from this digression, natural as it was.

To recommend in English that which is to teach people English looks like a most decided solecism. The book, however, is before us, to be spoken of; and how else are we to talk of it than in our own dialect? It is, however, the work of a skillful Spaniard, who, having encountered and vanquished the enormous difficulties of the most anomalous and cultivated languages, has drawn from his own experience this excellent method for helping his countrymen over the obliquities of English. Its merit for this purpose is rated very high. It seems to us to be very judicious, and especially in taking the just mean between a system too lean and one too corpulent. Grammarians for beginners seldom escape one of these defects, unless to fall into the opposite one.

We receive the book through our worthy neighbor, Mr. William M. Morrison; and with it a fellow volume, from the hands of the same editor, which does as to English folk what the other does as to Spanish. Its title is as follows:

"A Grammar of the Spanish Language, based on the system of D. Jose Urculla; also, with reference to the publications of the Academy of Spain, the works of Hernandez and Jose, and the compendium of Don Agustin Munoz Alvarez, of the College of Seville. According to the sixth Paris edition of Urculla's works. By FAYETTE ROBINSON. Philadelphia: Thomas, Cowperthwait & Co. 1848." 12mo. pp. 246.

This, we need scarcely say, is but a reversal of Urculla's system—the application to Spanish of the same method, *mutatis mutandis*, which he has so successfully applied for English. That method differs from nearly all others in this: that its main features are practical and comparative: that is to say, he depends rather on imparting the language by showing what is the Spanish locution for each English one, than by teaching the abstract laws of the tongue. The rules, in short, are conveyed by comparative examples, instead of precepts, which often load the memory without securing their application. Not, of course, that this is a method, which Master Duffier's so-called "natural one," which rejects all order and rule. Certain things in all languages are reducible to a method almost invariable and to rules almost without exception. Such parts of a language—its arbitrary mechanism—should therefore always be taught at once by regular system: the declension of nouns, the conjugation of verbs, should be learned from the jump, by rigid method. But much else, in all tongues—though not equally in all—is subject to laws so little certain, of so many exceptions, that it is shorter and easier, at first, to employ only practice and comparison. Afterwards, when the difficulties of constant occurrence have been solved by means of these, the pupil must study out the niceties of speech in reading abundantly the best authors and consulting minute grammars. But to study such from the first makes the work of learning too slow and repulsive.

We remark, in the twenty or thirty earlier pages of the book which we have examined, frequent typographical errors. There are also some inaccuracies. We recommend both to the ingenious author's attention.

"THE AMERICAN GALLERY OF ART, from the works of the best Artists, with poetical and prose illustrations, by distinguished American authors. Edited by J. S. SARTAIN. Philadelphia: Lindsay & Bakstien." 1848. 4to. pp. 111, with 14 illustrations.

A picturesque volume this, which does great credit to original art among us, and demonstrates better than almost any thing else that we have seen its rapid advance. The name of SARTAIN as its editor is scarcely less a pledge for the excellence of the subjects chosen from amongst American works of the pencil than is his gravest-tool an assurance for their fine execution as copies.

It seems from the preface that Mr. Sartain has long entertained a purpose of doing for indigenous

"Why 'natural'?" How is "Nature Displayed" in this method of teaching languages? Is it more "natural" to teach a written tongue without the aid of Elements than it would be to teach Botany, Mathematics, or any other science? Why not begin Astronomy with Laplace's "Mécanique Céleste"? Why not take Euclid by the tail, instead of the head? To methodize is to teach many facts at once. And there may be too much as well as too little method, in some studies, and particularly in a matter as arbitrary as parts of all languages.

art in general what he has done here for a few of its more favorite pupils. (*masters* we dare call only two or three in almost any one period) that is to say, he has designed to present to the country "with engraved specimens from the labors of all the most meritorious artists" of the United States. Doubting, however, the possibility of success for a work so comprehensive and high-priced as this would necessarily be in a single body, he has prudently decided to break it into a more manageable shape, to give it an annual issue, and to adopt for the popular form and character of the Winter Gift Book. This, then, is the first of a series. The literary illustrations which accompany the pictures, or are added to give bulk to the volume, consist of the usual matter of such publications; that is to say, they are fanciful and occasional only, not biographical. This may be unavoidable, but is, we think to be regretted. For in the things of this sort which we get, the merit and interest of the literary execution bears little proportion to the graphic excellence, and the pictures are all that atone for the insipidity of the page. Parlor verse and bouffon prose are worthy companions of such pictorial beauties; and the very object of Mr. S. being to popularize the names and works of our best painters, surely it would be far more agreeable, as well as useful to attach to each picture a notice of the artist and his works, and thus render the future publication a biographical gallery of our best painters. A thing thus conducted would have formed in the course of five or six years almost a complete history of the American art. Mr. Sartain is himself quite too good an artist to be destitute of literary talent; for all the higher excellence in the imaginative pursuits implies a general cultivation of the intellect and the taste; and we therefore doubt not that sketches from him of the lives and criticisms of the works of his kinsmen of the brush would easily make something far more interesting to all the world than the small romances, rhymed or unrhymed, which he has borrowed from others, to illustrate the far better production of his own brain.

Indeed, all such attempts as this are reversals of what is the true relation of the arts which his book associates. It is the business of painting to bring before the eyes the airier conceptions of the poet—not that of poetry (less tangible as it is) to illustrate what has been already made visible. The *seignis errant animos demissa per auras quamque subiecta sunt oculis fidelibus* is a just Horatian precept which must not be disregarded. Gray, too, and Campbell have exemplified the principle; the former in his verses on Bentley, the engraver's designs for his own (G's) poems; the latter in his address on John Kemble's acting. Gray says:

In silent awe, the tuneful choir among,
Half-pleased, half-kneeling, led the Muse admire,
While Bentley leads her sister Art along,
And bids the pencil answer to the lyre.
See, in their course, each transitory thought,
Fixed by his touch, a lasting essence take:
Each dream in fancy's airy coloring wrought
To local symmetry and life awake!

And Campbell, copying the idea, to transfer it only to another of the arts addressing itself directly to the eye and ear, says:

For ill can poetry express
Full many a tone of thought sublime;
And Sculpture, mute and motionless,
Steals but a glance at time;
While, by the mighty artist wrought,
Illusion's mingled triumphs come;
Verse ceases to be airy thought,
And Sculpture to be dumb.

A thousand words would not better explain the principle which we wish to enforce—that it is the graphic art which must be the auxiliary to poetry, not poetry to design. This last can make more palpable, while the preceding can only render less real the images of the other. This being so, it is easy to see what certain failure the poet must encounter who attempts to illustrate painting. That but a shadow, what can he make but the dim reflection of a shade? What would Milton's picture-like "L'Allegro" or Gray's "Elegy" have been if they had written them, not to bring Nature herself before our eyes, but the pictures of those whom their own powers of description have inspired? Enough, however, of all this.

It only remains for us to say that Mr. Sartain's is a beautiful book, valuable for its historical relation to art among us; and that it is to be purchased at the new book and stationery store of Messrs. TAYLOR & MADRYN, on Pennsylvania avenue, between 9th and 10th streets. They are serving young gentlemen, whose new and handsome establishment it is fit that we should take this first occasion to refer to with commendation.

DANIEL WEBSTER'S FAIR.—The great "Defender of the Constitution," it is well known, prides himself as much upon his skill and reputation as a farmer as he does upon all the fame which he has acquired as a lawyer, statesman, or diplomat. Every body has heard of his great farm, of one thousand acres or more, at Marshfield; as they have of his old homestead at Franklin. Both are among the very best in New England. But it is of neither of these farms we now speak. About half way from Meredith bridge to Meredith village, on the old stage road, near what is called the "Parade," Mr. Webster has another farm, which is undoubtedly to him "an older" and "a better" possession than either of the others. And it is a story that it too, which is worth repeating. Some thirty five or forty years ago, when Mr. W. was a younger man than he is now, and a practicing attorney in Portsmouth, he held an execution against an individual on the "Parade," in satisfaction of which a "nice little place"—"five acres, more or less," as he represented—was set off to him. Some time after, while journeying with his family in the interior, Mr. Webster concluded to ride up and see his "nice little place," with the tenant who occupied it. Climbing over the long hills which intervene between the "Parade" and the "Parade," he at length reached it, when he found a log hut, with about half an acre of the very best, in the shape of racks and bushes, to be seen any where in the Granite State! This was the extent of his "nice little place"—very nice, undoubtedly, to hold the world together, but of no conceivable utility for any other purpose. Without slighting from his carriage, the "Lord of the Manor" called the old lady whom he found in possession as tenant to the door, and, after sundry queries as to whether she paid her rent regularly, and, if not, whether she should not be turned off the place, he, the old dame protesting that she was poor and unable to pay—that she had heard the owner was "a very clever soul," and didn't believe he would be so cruel as to turn her out of house and home, &c., Daniel pulled a sum of money from his pocket, and, assuring his tenant that he knew the owner very well, told her to occupy the premises as long as she could afford to for the money he gave her, and be sure and take good care of them.

Whether Mr. W. has ever visited his "nice little place" since we know not; but it still remains in his possession, and is known in the region around as "Daniel Webster's Farm."—Doer (N. H.) Enquirer.

NATURAL GAS.—A vein of highly inflammable gas was struck a few days since, while boring for water in Franklin county, (Ky.) After penetrating with an auger to the depth of ninety-seven feet, nearly all the distance through solid rock, the gas found its way in a large volume to the surface, and when ignited burnt brilliantly. The discoverer has introduced it into his dwelling, and thinks the quantity which escapes from the aeriferous hole sufficient to light up a city.

At the Union course, New York, on the 20th of last month, a most extraordinary feat, by a sorrel horse out of the celebrated mare Panny Pullen, and sired by the full-blood horse Trustee, nine years old last spring. He performed on the trot without a break, except at the moment the word was given, twenty miles in 59 minutes and 34 seconds, being less than 2.59 to the mile.

DEATH OF A PATRIOT.

We learn from the Cincinnati papers that Gen. JAMES TAYLOR died at his residence in Newport, Kentucky, on Tuesday, the 7th instant.

He was born in 1769, in Caroline county, Virginia, and emigrated to Kentucky in 1792. He was Quartermaster General of the Northwestern Army during the last war with England, in which office he served with distinction.

He preserved his faculties to the last hour. It was a most grateful reflection to him that his life was spared till the day of the Presidential election; and, by the obliging disposition of the Judges of the Election, who went to his chamber to receive his vote, he had the satisfaction of casting it for his friend and relative, Gen. ZACHARY TAYLOR, for President of the United States. His remark on giving his vote was characteristic of the old soldier: "I have given the last shot for my country." He then gradually sunk into the arms of death.

Gen. JAMES TAYLOR was the oldest inhabitant of Campbell county, and was in the 80th year of his age. For a year past his health had been declining, and for two months he had been confined to his room.

In politics Gen. TAYLOR was an ardent friend of Mr. CLAY and the Whig party, and once or twice served as Presidential Elector in Kentucky. He was the largest landholder in the West—an estate which was commenced by the active and energetic performance of his duty as land surveyor—increased by his sagacity, industry, and perseverance, as a man of business, and has recently been much enlarged by the rapid growth and prosperity of Cincinnati and the region of country around it.

The Cincinnati Atlas remarks that "few men have been more widely known in the West, more actively or adventurously engaged in its early scenes, and none have been more eminently successful in his pursuits. He was a remarkably agreeable companion, and having a retentive memory, he was a living record of the earliest and most interesting scenes of pioneer history. We have known him from our boyhood, and ever found him a man of high personal honor, of hospitable feelings, of liberal sentiments, a kind friend, and a patriotic citizen. He sleeps now with that rare and successful pioneer, whose living names are nearly erased, but whose memory must long make the traditional memory of this land and its early history."

THE BALTIMORE ATHENÆUM.

BALTIMORE, NOVEMBER 10, 1848.

One of my objects in visiting Baltimore was to spend a morning in the newly-established Athenæum of this city, and it affords me pleasure to state that I have been much gratified with all that I have seen. The edifice is situated on Market street, and only about a stone's throw from Barnum's Hotel. It is large and handsome, and with the lot cost \$38,000, the whole of this amount having been contributed by the merchants and other citizens of Baltimore. It has three floors, the first of which is occupied by the Mercantile Library for young men, library 8,000 volumes; the second floor is occupied by the Library Company of Baltimore, library 15,000; and the third floor is occupied by the Maryland Historical Society, library 2,000 volumes. That portion of the building belonging to the "Library Company of Baltimore" is finished off with real oak and in the most elegant manner; it is richly carpeted throughout, and the collection of books is particularly valuable. It is an eminently popular institution, and, to show you that its friends are of the right sort, I may mention that its last donation, from a citizen of Baltimore, consisted of twenty-one consecutive volumes of the National Intelligencer and fourteen volumes of the London Times and Chronicle. The conversation and reading rooms are quite as comfortable as taste and money could possibly make them, and, judging from a list that was shown me, I should think the latter room better supplied with newspapers and periodicals (of this and foreign countries) than any other reading room in this country. The arrangements for the comfort of those who visit this library are of the most liberal order, and reflect much credit upon the gentlemen who control it, the Librarian being J. SMITH HOGAN, Esq., the well-known Editor of the Bank & City Magazine.

But it is time that I should ascend to the gallery of the Athenæum, where, under the management of the Maryland Historical Society, there is now open to the public the first of a series of annual exhibitions of paintings. The pictures here collected number no less than three hundred and sixteen specimens, and when I tell you that nearly all our native artists are worthily represented, and that the discerning eye may in reality pick out a gem by even an old master, you will be ready to believe that the exhibition is of a very high order. Though I have been familiar with the picture exhibitions of this country for a dozen years past, I am compelled to say that I have never yet visited a single one which was graced with a greater number of genuine works of art. By way of explanation, however, it ought to be mentioned that the pictures are exhibited as the property of many private individuals, and, as they have evidently made an effort to get up a fine exhibition, it cannot be expected that another display of equal merit can be made for some years to come. I have not time to write, and I fear you have not the space to publish, a criticism of this exhibition; but, by way of whetting the appetite of your picture-loving readers, I will barely mention some of the artists whose productions are now to be seen in Baltimore. Of the old masters, there may be found pictures by Carlo Dolce, a pair of portraits by Titian and Rembrandt, a man's hand by Van Dyke, a characteristic piece by Teniers, two capital things by Manet, and a flower piece by Van Housen; of English artists, admirable portraits by Martin Shee, Laurence, Leslie, Gilbert Stuart, and Copley; and of French artists, David and Vernet are well represented. Of American artists, I notice some of the better productions of West, Cole, Durand, Mount, G. L. Brown, Doughty, Fisher, Leutze, Sully, Rathbun, Woodville, A. J. Miller, and Ernst Fischer. The two last named gentlemen are citizens of Baltimore, and the efforts of Mr. Fischer, which are entirely new to me, are of a high order. There is an originality in his designs and a masterly touch, which speak of a most exalted genius. If he is a young man, I know of no one who is more certain of attaining to a very high rank in his profession. But enough for the present. This exhibition is to continue open until the 1st of December, and my advice to all persons of taste who may have occasion to pass through Baltimore, is to see and spend an hour in the Athenæum.

The Tallahassee Sentinel confirms the conclusion that the telegraphic despatch circulated from Washington over Pennsylvania and Ohio, just before the October elections, and stating that the Democrats had carried the Governor and Legislature in Florida, was gotten up for effect by the party managers at Washington. The following was the despatch:

FLORIDA GLORIOUSLY TRIUMPHANT!

WASHINGTON, OCT. 9.—7 1/2 O'CLOCK P. M. Latest telegraphic despatch, 4 P. M., Florida Legislature from 2 to 11 Democratic; Democratic Governor elected by 400 majority. Some doubt about Congressional election.

Executive Committee Jackson Democratic Association. J. D. HONOR, Chairman. Now (says the Sentinel) we believe it is an indisputable fact, that not one report of our election, founded on alleged returns unfavorable to the Whigs, had appeared in any Southern print from election day up to that time or since. Where, then, did this great "Kernity" get their intelligence? From nowhere else than their own brains. It must have been "got up" by them, *gratified* for no other purpose than to influence, so far as it could, the result in Pennsylvania. This is worse than petty larceny.

OFFICIAL.

REGULATION.—In future, Commanders in the Navy will wear in the centre of the shoulder straps authorized for officers of that grade by the regulation of June 4th, 1845, a foil anchor, in gold embroidery, not to exceed one and one-eighth inch in length. J. Y. MASON.

NAVY DEPARTMENT, NOV. 10, 1848.

WASHINGTON NATIONAL MONUMENT.

The following letter has been received from the Secretary of State of Mississippi, acknowledging the receipt of a piece of the corner-stone of the great National Monument:

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY OF STATE, City of Jackson, (Miss.) November 1, 1848.

DEAR SIR: I take pleasure in acknowledging the receipt, by the hands of Hon. JEFFERSON DAVIS, of a "piece of the corner-stone of the Washington National Monument," presented by the Board of Managers.

On behalf of the State of Mississippi, I will request of you the kindness to present to the Board of Managers assurances of the high appreciation in which this mark of their kindness and courtesy is held.

It will be placed in the archives of the State, there to produce, as doubtless it will in all who view it, an abiding interest in this noble Monument of a nation's gratitude, and an increasing desire to preserve inviolate that sacred Union which now gives to all a part in the "Father of his Country," and the glorious and beneficent institutions which he aided in founding and rendering permanent.

With great respect, I have the honor to be, your obedient servant,

SAMUEL STAMPS, Secretary of State.

To GEORGE WATKINSON, Esq., Secretary of the W. M. Society.

From the Plough, the Loom, and the Anvil.

Why go away from kindred and friends to the "Far West?"

Except to indulge that riving temper which prompted old Daniel Boone to say, that he could not breathe freely when civilization approached his dwelling in the woods.

The facilities for getting away to the West are so great and so systematized, with numerous agents and harpies on the look-out for all immigrants who come, that our old seaboard States are no more thought of than it they had been sunk in the ocean fifty years ago. Yet look here at the evidence of their capacity to yield ample return to labor, and that in the midst of every social convenience and arrangement. Mr. Newton, not long since a member of Congress, and a very enterprising agriculturist, living in one of the oldest and most deserted districts of Virginia, says to the editor of the American Farmer:

"Our agriculture is rapidly improving in this region. We formerly thought ours not a suitable soil or climate for wheat, but now, by good husbandry and suitable manures, we make fine crops. There have been frequent instances of late of a product from fifteen to twenty-eight bushels per acre. The potato, to whose long preserving efforts, from a bushel and seven eighths of Zimmerman wheat I reaped forty-two bushels—a part of it yielded at the rate of twenty-eight for one. We are using guano to some extent. The African we find greatly inferior to the Peruvian. The price of it is too high, considering the low price of wheat. I wish to purchase about ten tons, and if the price falls under \$40, I will do so. The potato, to whose long preserving efforts, from a bushel and seven eighths of Zimmerman wheat I reaped forty-two bushels—a part of it yielded at the rate of twenty-eight for one. We are using guano to some extent. The African we find greatly inferior to the Peruvian. 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